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Music education in Montessori schools: An exploratory study of school directors' perceptions in the United States

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Abstract

This exploratory study examined the changing role of music education and the availability of musical experiences for students attending Montessori schools in the Midwestern United States. On a survey instrument designed by the researcher, Montessori school directors ($N = 36$) from eight states shared descriptions of the current role of music at their schools, the challenges faced when teaching music, individual perceptions of the impact of music on development, and beliefs about music as a valuable component of the curriculum. Data included responses to Likert-scale items and open-ended questions in an online survey. Analyses revealed that while school directors believed music could be used to engage students in learning or to build upon issues of multicultural understanding, opportunities for musical engagement were limited as a result of stringent budget cuts or time restrictions in the classroom. Implications are discussed in terms of including music in the Montessori classroom in ways that align with Maria Montessori's pedagogies situated within an international context.

Keywords

Montessori, music education, pedagogy, school directors

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